

The PARANOID Newsletter

Because they ARE out to get you.

*By three methods we may learn wisdom: First, by reflection, which is noblest;
Second, by imitation, which is easiest; and third by experience, which is the bitterest.
- Confucius*

In a country well governed, poverty is something to be ashamed of.
In a country badly governed, wealth is something to be ashamed of.
- Confucius

Introduction

This is the eleventh issue of the PARANOID newsletter. This newsletter is for the person who takes their privacy VERY seriously. Lets face it, America is a POLICE STATE. Anything the government doesn't like is now considered terrorism. What would our founding fathers say if they were alive today!

Safe cracking with thermal imaging technology

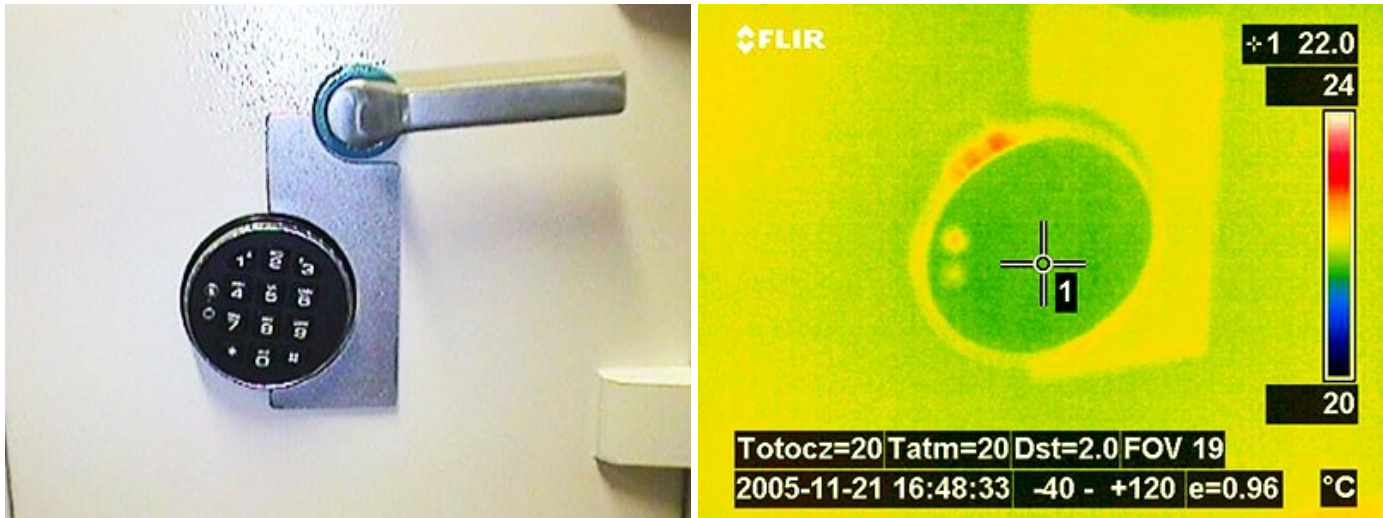
Virtually all keypad entry systems - as used in various applications, including building access control, alarm system control, electronic lock safes, ATM input, etc - are susceptible to a trivial low-profile passphrase snooping scheme. This attack enables the attacker to quickly and unobtrusively recover previously entered passphrases with a high degree of success. This is in contrast to previously documented methods of keypad snooping; these methods were in general either highly intrusive - required close presence or installation of specialized hardware - or difficult to carry out and not very reliable (e.g., examining deposited fingerprints - works in low-use situations only, and does not reveal the ordering of digits).

The attacker can perform the aforementioned attack by deploying an uncooled microbolometer thermal imaging (far infrared) camera within up to approximately five to ten minutes after valid keycode entry. Although this may sound outlandish, the heat transferred during split-second contact of individual keys with human body (even through, for example, gloves) is significant enough and dissipates slowly enough to make this possible after the area has been cleared of all personnel.

Furthermore, since the image can be acquired from a considerable distance (1-10 meters is easy to achieve), the attacker can afford to maintain a remarkably low profile through the process.

To put things in perspective, portable (handheld) thermal imaging devices, such as the one pictured above, are commercially available without major restrictions from manufacturers such as Flir or Fluke. Prices begin at \$5,000 to \$10,000 for brand new units, and top-of-the-line models boast a 0.05 K thermal resolution at impressively low sensor noise levels. The "return on investment" can be quite high in most illicit uses, and indeed - historically, ATM phishers were known to be willing to spend money on specialized equipment such as custom assemblies that included high-end digital cameras with wireless access. As such, the scheme is not as outlandish as it might have seemed.

The following sequence of images demonstrates the feasibility of the attack; in this case, the target is LA GARD ComboGard 3035 electronic lock (with rubber keys) installed on an industrial-grade safe:



Keypad in idle state - in visible light (left) and in thermal imaging (right). Minimal ambient temperature variations are present due to different thermal characteristics of materials used in the safe.



A sequence of keys is being pressed (1-5-9). The difference in colors on the right is due to IR camera automatically adjusting to relatively high temperature of human body, to avoid overexposure and blooming.



Code entry complete. All pressed keys are still clearly readable in this thermogram; the sequence of digits can be inferred from the relative temperature of these spots - ones with lower registered temperature (more faint color) were pressed earlier than others.

There are some real-world considerations, of course: reuse of digits in a code, very rapid code entry, vastly differing keypress times, and other code entry quirks (say, victim's habit of resting his palm on the keypad) may render the attack less successful, and may make results more ambiguous. That said, it's still nifty, and apparently not limited to bad science-fiction or computer games; civilian access to sufficiently advanced technology is possible. All in all, many airports, numerous bank branches, and various other entities, might want to reconsider the effectiveness of their defenses.

A proper defense against such techniques would be not to rely on keypad-only access control in easily accessible areas, unless additional advanced countermeasures can be implemented (well-implemented scrambling keypads originally intended to thwart fingerprint or key wear analysis, for example). Smart-card, biometric, or plain old key-based protection can be added to reduce exposure.

Side thought: in terms of safe cracking, another interesting area of research is differential power analysis (DPA) of electronic locks. High-security locks on small- and medium-size safes usually have external connectors that can be used to supply emergency battery power to the device; these usually directly connect to the same route that is used to supply primary power, and as such can be used to measure power consumption characteristics and/or capture CPU-generated feedback noise, and possibly to differentiate between valid and invalid keycodes as digits are entered. If you happen to have a good 'scope lying around, give it a try.

Countermeasures

Place whole hand on keypad for several seconds to ensure the entire keypad is warmed. This can also prevent someone from placing dust, grease, or some other hard to see residue from returning and examining the keypad.

Scrambling keypads are more expensive but prevent these attacks without any additional user effort.

Use a glass rod to dial in your combination. (glass is IR opaque)

Use rotating dial locks.

NSA continues surveillance of journalists

By Wayne Madsen
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On May 10, 2005, WMR reported on the existence of a highly-classified database at the National Security Agency (NSA), formerly code-named "FIRSTFRUITS," that monitored journalists who reported on the activities of the eavesdropping agency, as well as other intelligence matters. A few weeks later, according to an executive-level source at the NSA, and confirmed by a related source within NSA's "Q" Directorate, the Directorate for Security and Counterintelligence, this editor has been a subject of a national security investigation since June 2005 that remains ongoing. The investigation of this editor is classified at the level SECRET/COMINT (NOFORN). COMINT is "Communications Intelligence" and NOFORN denotes "Not Releasable to Foreign Nationals/Governments/Non-US Citizens."

According to National Security Agency/Central Security Service Policy 1-27, dated March 20, 2006, and signed by NSA Chief of Staff Deborah Bonanni, the investigation of the public disclosure of the unconstitutional and illegal FIRSTFRUITS surveillance system is being coordinated by the NSA, Department of Defense, Director of National Intelligence, and the Department of Justice.

The following are excerpts from the editor's article that triggered the national security criminal investigation: *"NSA maintains a database that tracks unofficial and negative articles written about the agency. Code named 'FIRSTFRUITS,' the database is operated by the Denial and Deception (D&D) unit within SID [Signals Intelligence Division]. High priority is given to articles written as a result of possible leaks from cleared personnel.*

According to those familiar with FIRSTFRUITS, Bill Gertz of The Washington Times features prominently in the database. Before [NSA Director Michael] Hayden's reign and during the Clinton administration, Gertz was often leaked classified documents by anti-Clinton intelligence officials in an attempt to demonstrate that collusion between the administration and China was hurting U.S. national security. NSA, perhaps legitimately, was concerned that China could actually benefit from such disclosures.

In order that the database did not violate United States Signals Intelligence Directive (USSID) 18, which specifies that the names of 'U.S. persons' are to be deleted through a process known as minimization, the names of subject journalists were blanked out. However, in a violation of USSID 18, certain high level users could unlock the database field through a super-user status and view the 'phantom names' of the journalists in question. Some of the 'source' information in FIRSTFRUITS was classified -- an indication that some of the articles in the database were not obtained through open source means. In fact, NSA insiders report that the communications monitoring tasking system known as ECHELON is being used more frequently for purely political eavesdropping having nothing to do with national security or counter terrorism.

In addition, outside agencies and a 'second party,' Great Britain's Government Communications Headquarters (GCHQ), are permitted to access the journalist database. FIRSTFRUITS was originally developed by the CIA but given to NSA to operate with CIA funding. The database soon grew to capacity, was converted from a Lotus Notes to an Oracle system, and NSA took over complete ownership of the system from the CIA.

Tens of thousands of articles are found in FIRSTFRUITS and part of the upkeep of the system has been outsourced to outside contractors, such as Booz Allen, which periodically hosts inter-agency Foreign Denial and Deception meetings within its Sensitive Compartmented Information Facility or 'SCIF' in Tyson's Corner, Virginia. Currently, in addition to NSA and GCHQ, the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (NGA), the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA), and National Reconnaissance Office (NRO) routinely access the database, which is, in essence, a classified and more powerful version of the commercial NEXIS news search database.

In addition to Gertz, other journalists who feature prominently in the database include Seymour Hersh of The New Yorker,; author and journalist James Bamford, James Risen of The New York Times, Vernon Loeb of The Washington Post, John C. K. Daly of UPI, and this journalist [Wayne Madsen].

Since the disclosure of FIRSTFRUITS, NSA changed the cover name but the system remains in existence. Not only does the follow-on to FIRST FRUITS contain articles about NSA written by journalists, it has been expanded to include information gleaned from wiretaps on journalists, including sources with whom they communicate by phone, email, fax, and Voice-over-IP (VOIP), including Skype, which the NSA has managed to bring under easier surveillance due to some recent advances in VOIP surveillance technology, according to NSA sources.

This editor has, thanks to dozens of NSA sources, managed to report on the poor morale; overbearing Stasi-like conduct of NSA security personnel, including the wrongful prosecution and conviction of NSA Iraqi shop analyst Ken Ford, Jr.; contract mismanagement and fraud conducted by then-NSA Director General Michael Hayden; outrageous treatment of NSA whistleblowers by the NSA security and psychological staffs that work in the same fashion that the old Soviet KGB and psychiatric hospitals treated dissidents; and the outsourcing of sensitive signals intelligence contracts to companies with dubious links to foreign intelligence agencies, most importantly, those of Israel. Federal investigators are apparently using the terms “espionage” and “treason” with regard to the investigation that includes this editor. The maximum penalty for espionage and treason, according to U.S. Sentencing Guidelines, is death.

On January 12, 2006, this editor first reported on the criminal investigation being carried out by the Bush administration: *“Informed intelligence sources have informed this editor that he has, since October 2005, been under an active federal criminal investigation as part of the Bush administration’s probe of leaks about illegal NSA surveillance of U.S. citizens.*

To reiterate what I’ve stated before: I refuse to cede my First Amendment rights and will not cooperate with ANY grand jury asking questions about sources and I will refuse to turn over notebooks or other materials to any investigators, warrant or not. I’m willing to become a political prisoner rather than succumb to the fascist thugs in the Bush administration. WMR is working on a number of investigations involving The Carlyle Group, the Fellowship Foundation, and illegal surveillance. We will continue to publish until the Bush administration makes their move to shut us down. Again, your support has helped us to gain enough of a media presence to make the Bush administration nervous.”

This publication, not intimidated by NSA, the FBI, or other Bush administration entities, will continue to report on the misuse of America’s intelligence agencies for political purposes and the repeated violations of the U.S. Constitution by illegal surveillance of citizens, including First Amendment-protected journalists. WMR has learned today [Monday] that our colleague, New York journalist Joe Lauria, who has written a series of articles on the Turkish/Israeli intelligence network exposed by former FBI translator Sibel Edmonds, is now also the subject of an FBI “leaks” investigation.

The FIRSTFRUITS journalist surveillance system was renamed after our exposure of its existence. According to our NSA source, who was involved in another operation designed to scan the media and academia for leaks, a program called “Cryptologic Insecurities,” FIRSTFRUITS exists within a new strategic program by NSA to surveil journalists, which may be the subject of a classified United States Signals Intelligence Directive (USSID 304P), dated June 7, 2007. One term used by NSA with regard to journalists in the FIRSTFRUITS follow-on surveillance system is the Orwellian-sounding “media control.”

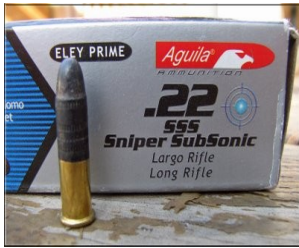
There is also reason to believe that additional journalists are now subject to FIRSTFRUITS surveillance and include Eric Lichtblau of the *New York Times*, Christiane Amanpour of CNN, and Lauria. WMR has also learned that NSA has drastically cut the number of Hebrew and Russian linguists, with the Hebrew linguists suffering the greatest cuts. The result of this decision is that the two languages used most by international organized criminal syndicates that are part of the Russian-Israeli Mafia are virtually free to conduct their weapons, diamond, and drug smuggling operations, as well as financial fraud, without being subject to NSA surveillance.

Perhaps the fact that there exists a cabal within the U.S. District for Maryland, a few officials who have conspired to wrongfully prosecute NSA employees is not coincidental to the purge of Hebrew and Russian linguists at NSA. A triumvirate has emerged that suggests illegal collusion to prosecute NSA whistleblowers that includes U.S. Attorney for Maryland Rod Rosenstein, his assistant David Salem, and US Judge Peter Messitte, who, according to U.S. intelligence sources, carries, in addition to his U.S. passport, a passport issued by Portugal.

WMR has also learned that an NSA signals intelligence mission codenamed "SALAMANDER" and devoted to monitoring communications in Georgia, may have been misused to provide the neocon Georgian government of Mikheil Saakashvili with intelligence gleaned from NSA intercepts of Saakashvili's political opponents, including alleged phone calls with Russian embassy officials in Tbilisi. Those targeted in the wiretaps include Labor Party leader Shalva Natelashvili, Freedom Party leader Konstantin Gamsakhurdia, the late Georgian opposition financier Badri Patarkatsishvili, and Conservative Party leader Zviad Dzidziguri. The provision of U.S. SIGINT to a nation like Georgia, which is well outside the normal American "second party" and "third party" SIGINT partners, represents a dramatic departure from traditional U.S. intelligence management and may have provided sensitive sources and methods information to the Georgian government, one which includes a number of dual Georgian-Israeli nationals.

Review of Low noise .22 long rifle ammo

Who needs a silencer with Aguila's .22 Sniper Subsonic 60 Grain quiet ammunition?



At last count I had nineteen different types of .22 rim fire ammunition. Today, I have to make that an even twenty. Once again I have fallen to the curiosity of an offering previously unknown to me. This time it was, perhaps, the most unusual .22 rim fire I have seen. Aguila, a company not afraid to offer something different, brings us it's 'Sniper Subsonic' round with a 60 grain solid lead bullet. Yes.... 60 grains. The heaviest .22 rim fire normally encountered is 40 grains. Higher velocity rounds usually drop that to 36 grains, or even 30 grains.

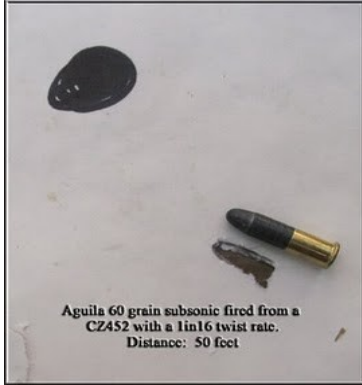


Aguila managed to squeeze that huge slug into a long rifle sized package by taking a unique route. They used a .22 short case, with a reduced powder charge, and loaded a very long lead bullet into it, bringing the whole cartridge out to .22 long rifle length. The SSS round looks the part too, with half the cartridge length being lead bullet. That's more than unusual, it's down right strange looking. The idea is fascinating, with the heavy bullet retaining substantial energy while the low velocity and charge give greatly reduced noise. The problem with this approach is one of bullet stability.



Heavier low velocity bullets require a rapid twist rate to stabilize the bullet in flight. Lighter high velocity bullets can use a slower twist rate to accomplish the same stability. Bullet design also comes into play in the equation. Even the type of rifling can have an effect.

Typical .22 rim fire firearms shooting a 35 to 40 grain bullet at 1000 fps work well with a 1 in 16" twist rate, and this is standard for these weapons. A .223 center fire shooting a 60 grain bullet at 3200 fps usually works well with a 1 in 9" twist.



A .22 rim fire shooting a 60 grain bullet at subsonic velocities? A rapid twist would be in order, and its doubtful that 1 in 16" will do it. The test is simple. Load an accurate .22 rifle with the new ammunition, sight on a reasonable target, and note the results. That is exactly what I did, and the results are shown here.

The rifle chosen was a CZ452 Trainer, and is exceptionally accurate. It has shown a tolerance for various cartridges, without being overly picky about what it will shoot well. The long barrel and deep rifling may have something to do with that, as well as the tight bore. This rifle, even with open sights, constantly surprises shooters with it's consistent ability to group tightly.



Setting simple 4"x6" card stock targets at 50 feet, several rounds were fired. Only a were needed to answer the basic question. The very first round was a classic keyhole, as was every round after. The Aguila 60 grain bullets simply would not stabilize in the 1 in 16" twist CZ barrel.

Fired at both a paper target and a block of pine, the imprints are clear sideways impacts of a bullet tumbling in flight. Perhaps this ammunition would be better suited to a .22 wearing a custom rapid twist barrel, as many folks have fitted to Ruger 10/22s. Also, it might be a perfect round for an AR equipped with a rim fire conversion, especially if it has a suppressor can installed. For my .22's, all of which have 1 in 16" twist barrels, I'm afraid this Aguila offering is useless.

22LR 20gr Aguila Colibri

Solid no powder charge. Use only in handguns! Even quieter than Super Colibri. Perfect ammo for teaching a youngster with a .22 LR revolver. Sounds like a loud airgun when fired.

22LR 20gr Aguila Super Colibri

20-gr Solid, no powder charge, 500 fps. Use only in handguns! Perfect ammo for teaching a youngster with a .22 LR revolver. Sounds like a loud airgun when fired.

22LR 32gr Segmented HP Hyper-Velocity

Manufactured in the USA by Blount (CCI) for Magnum Performance Ballistics. Muzzle Energy 149 ft-lbs, Muzzle Velocity 1,367 FPS 32-gr .22 Long Rifle (LR) The bullet split into 4 main segments on impact. These segment cause 4 separate wound channels. Great for small game and self-defense pocket pistols. 1/2" groups at 50 is not uncommon.

Comments from a .22 LR hunter

I have a few boxes of Eley 22 CB/wadcutter shaped caps left. From two of my rifles and three of my handguns they are very good...accurate from very fine, to minute of squirrel head at 25 yards. From the rest of my 22s they are stinkers. If I hadn't tested them in those guns only, and didn't know that 22RF ammo is generally like this, I would have thought the stuff was just no good. Moral of the story...test ammo in as many 22RF guns as you can...and before you pronounce any new 22RF gun or ammo inaccurate, try a number of brands in a your guns if

possible, till you find the combination you likes best....Rem C.B. Caps, Subsonic Remington, Aguila (no powder), Wolf Performance Match, Aguila Super Extra shorts and long rifle, Yellow Jacket Remington, Win Power Point, CCI Quik Shok, Remington Cyclone, Aguila 22-SSS, Remington Subsonic, CCI Stinger, Remington Thunderbolt. One thing that did become very apparent, when the 22RFs (no matter what brand) were ACU'RZED the velocity went up. A little with some brands like the subsonic types, and a good deal with the high and hyper velocity types. What the ACU'RZING does do with the subsonic types is vastly improve their accuracy, Aguila's no powder rounds for example actually grouped from the Colt... where they won't with out ACU'RZING.

As far as hunting with 22RFs goes for me...I don't. I will use them for exterminating small vermin, garbage birds, and a quail or two on occasion for the pot. But for the most part, I use loaded down centerfires on any animals over a several pounds or more. That is personal choice on my part...you may rightly feel differently. And with that, I also think range and nose shape have more to do with 22RF killing power than most realize.

For a very extended period I and a number of friends, we worked at four position 22RF (among other calibers) rifle target shooting in NRA matches...as well as NRA handgun matches....I have no idea how much 22RF ammo I have burned in contest, practice, plinking and vermin...but it is quite a lot I'm sure. For a one year period in 1972 getting ready for National Matches at Camp Perry, I fired a minimum of one brick of 22RFs a week for a full year. I test a goodly amount of ammo every year.... since I put the ACU'RZR on the market, I have increased with a lot of 22RF shooting, in testing the tools and such.

I have used a number of CB caps. Most of them are silent in 22 rifles. And very low in sound from decent length handgun barrels. The Eley wadcutter shape in dry phone books penetrates the best with near 550 pages. The Aguila 'No Powder 22RFs' penetrated the best at 320 pages...and CCI CB caps came in at 412 pages from rifles. Out of handguns the Aguila was the quietest...CCI had a snapping sound and Eley sounded like a kid's cap pistol. Again accuracy seemed to have more to do with the gun's appetite than anything else. Though if I had to prioritize, Eley would be first in everything...accuracy, power, excellent nose shape...Aguila next for accuracy, it's 20 grain bullet is pointed so in pest flesh it does quite well, and the CCI last.

Strange as it may seem, Aguila's SniperSubSonic ammo with it's 60 grain bullet and much more power, sounds about the same as CB caps from handguns. And it doesn't drop from the point of aim out to 25 to 40 yards like the other CBs do. And carries a great deal more energy. When CBs, Subsonic and such are ACU'RZED the diameter of the bullet is enlarged giving better accuracy because they come out of the tool perfectly round, but also the extra friction ups the velocity and striking energy.

The Aguila 'No Powder' ammo has something else going for it, it is in long rifle cases...I like that...less fouling in the 22 chambers. CCI makes a CB cap long, I had no luck with it in anything. Certainly the noses I reformed and others on the CB caps had a very noticeable change in killing power on garbage birds. I don't like Starlings, they have very bad habits and are very dirty birds, they carry a variety of diseases that hurt house hold pets more than people. Their only reason for existence is for bullet testing.

We had an Irish Setter when we were living in the wilderness years ago. He was wonderful, but really past his age for bird hunting anymore. He was in his sunset years...so when I would take out a rifle he would get all excited like bird dogs do, but his heart wasn't really in it. One day he was out in the back of the house and I shot a nasty starling off an electric power line. Ol'Mike saw the bird fall, his instincts kicked in and he looped as best he could to the downed bird, scooped it up in his mouth, turned to run back to me. Stopped suddenly....dropped the bird, looked down at it, and then vomited all over it!!!!

I always try to keep a supply of CB caps on hand...a good supply. Never know when you need a silent load. I have a trick I use to get rid of the neighborhood cats from coming in and fouling the property. I really don't want to hurt them, just dissuade them from returning. I call it "tail nipping". Using a scoped rifle I have set for close range...I hit them right on the tip end of the tail with a CB. They rarely come back for seconds, the damage is slight...they lick it clean and it heals Quikly...but the lesson is learned. The new "No Powder" Aguila caps are great for this, because they are so low powered and silent. At a sedate 405 fps from the rifle they only generate around 8

pounds...a little better than an air rifle load. From the 6 inch handgun they went 432fps.

Remember 22RFs reach their peak velocity in 16 inch barrels. With CB cap type loads that is most likely closer to 10 inches. So out of my 24 inch rifle they actually showed almost 30 fps less velocity all without ACU'RZING. Once they are reformed the velocity goes up. CCI CB caps went 600 from the 2 ½ inch barrel, and 758 from the 6 inch Colt, and 809 from the 24" rifle. From an old 16 Ithaca single shot they went 888 fps. Very silent from the rifle...as all CBs seem to be. WW's CBs went 556 from the little autoloader, 650 from the 6 inch Colt and 719 from the 24 inch barrel. Aquila's SSS ammo with it's 60 grain bullet does 665 from the 2 ½ inch, 826 from the Colt and 950 from the rifle. And with that bullet weight it is the best killer of the quiet to silent loads. Giving 120 foot pounds of muzzle energy from the rifle and 90 lbs from the Colt.

I test the expansion and killing properties of 22RFs by firing them into ice. I fill an old plastic milk jug or three liter soda bottle with water and freeze it. Most 22s will stop in them and you can see how they perform, the energy dispersion is very easy to see. And after the water melts, you can recover the bullet. And compare the performance. I write on the plastic bottle what bullet/ammo is in them, if I am testing a number of ammo types with a number of bottles, (alas, short term memory when you get old is untrustworthy). This doesn't mean that's how they will react in vermin and varmints... it is just a comparison between standard shapes and the ACU'RZED shapes for maximum potential performance.

Aguila must use pure lead, the no powder load called the Aguila Super Colibri, after hitting the ice lost only a grain in weight. As you can also see by the photo, the 60 grain bullet is so long that Aguila uses the short case to keep the over all length of the 22 long rifle, so it will function thru long rifle actions. Works fine in most of my auto pistols...up to a point. The same with two of my rifles...but if the rifling isn't fast enough accuracy goes out the window...remember you are using a bullet that is over 33% longer and a velocity that is very low. In my CZ rifle and my Anschutz Mod. 64 Silhouette heavy barrel it goes into very small groups...in my Rossi pump it goes sideways at 25 yards...you have to test. This SSS ammo is called subsonic...and that is exactly what it is...not silent, but quiet. It is the bullet's weight that makes it a fine short range killer of vermin. I like it better ACU'RZED than the CBs, unless I need total silence.

Mafia Hitmen, .22 caliber killers.

It seems improbable that a brotherhood as violent as the Mafia is becoming still more savage. It also seems unlikely that teams of professional hit men armed with silencer-equipped .22-cal. automatic pistols are roaming the land, with at least 20 "executions" to their credit in the past two years. Finally, it seems unthinkable that the case of the .22 hits could be a direct challenge by the Mob to the U.S. Government.

But the FBI fears all this is true, with good reason. Two of the victims were FBI informants. Four others were potential prosecution witnesses. Two of the killings — five months apart — were committed with the same gun. Says an FBI agent: "Keeping a murder gun is risky business. The Mafia has a reason for doing that. They're giving us a message."

Mafia Hot Line. Detective fiction has it that the .22-cal. pistol with its tiny one-ounce slug is a gnat swatter, at its worst a woman's weapon snatched from a purse to dispatch an errant lover. No self-respecting all-pro killer would carry one. The facts, however, are otherwise. The CIA has long preferred the .22. The agency's predecessor, the Office of Strategic Services, developed a silencer-equipped Hi-Standard .22-cal. automatic pistol during World War II. It turned out to be the only production-model handgun that can be effectively silenced, and it has been the favorite of spooks ever since. Now, says the FBI, the .22 has found new fans.

The Mob's change in execution methods is exemplified by February's killing of Mafia Consigliere Frank ("Bomp") Bompensiero, 71. Shortly before 8 p.m. on Feb. 10, Bomp walked from his San Diego home to a nearby public telephone booth, which he used as an office in order to avoid wiretaps. In his pocket was a notebook

containing coded balance sheets of loan-shark usury payments and lists of coded phone numbers. The numbers turned out to be those of other public telephones scattered through California and Nevada. The phones constitute a West Coast Mafia hot-line system.

At designated hours on specified days, Bomp would call a San Francisco number to chat with a sidekick named Jimmy Fratianno; at other times he would dial a Las Vegas booth for messages from Tony Spilotro, a Chicago gang heavyweight. He also received calls at the booth. A Mafia member for 40 years, Bomp was a consequential figure in the Mob hierarchy. He was also an informant for the FBI, the highest-placed Mafioso in that role.

The FBI has no idea whom Bompensiero telephoned that night, but they know one of his callers fingered him for execution. The old man was an easy target. As he walked away from the phone booth toward his home, he was dropped by a .22-cal. slug that entered his neck near the spine. The coup de grâce was a second shot near the right ear. No shots were heard. When the body was found, the notebook was missing. Nineteen other victims are listed by the FBI in the case of the .22 hits. Almost all were dispatched with multiple shots to the head from a .22-cal. automatic pistol. All had in some way crossed the Mob. The most noteworthy:

Sam Giancana, 66, retired Mafia boss, who was shot in the basement of his Chicago home in June 1975. Investigators believe Giancana was slain for refusing to share the take from Caribbean gambling ships, a fringe benefit that he acquired in the early 1960s.

Jack Molinas, 43, master fixer of college basketball games in the nationwide point-shaving scandal of 1961, and later the producer of hard-core sex films. He was shot in the head in his Hollywood Hills home in August 1975 for cheating Mafia loan sharks.

Tamara Rand, 54, San Diego businesswoman, murdered at home in November 1975 to keep her from telling what she knew about Mob-dominated gambling casinos in Las Vegas.

Edward Lazar, 40, accountant and mortgage-company president, gunned down in February 1975 in a Phoenix parking garage the night before he was to appear before a grand jury investigating land speculation.

Augie Maniaci, 66, Milwaukee swindler, who was executed in September 1976 in an alley behind his home. Maniaci was an FBI informant.

Vincent Capone, 39, a small-time gambler and loan shark slain in Hoboken, N.J., in August 1976 while his Cadillac was stopped for a red light. Two killers hit him with 15 shots. He was reportedly about to turn state's evidence in an investigation of New Jersey Mobster John DiGilio.

Frank Chin, 48, professional wiretapper gunned down with six bullets to the head in a New York City apartment building Jan. 20. Also a potential state's witness against the Mob, Chin (TIME, Feb. 21) had been hired by DiGilio to screen the gangster's offices for police eavesdropping devices.

Arthur Milgram, 48, head of a company that sells New York State lottery tickets through vending machines, executed on Feb. 8 in a Queens parking lot. Milgram was reportedly about to squeal on Mafia loan sharks who were trying to take over his business.

The grim prospect of a professional coast-to-coast gang methodically exterminating potential court witnesses and FBI informants has led the bureau to assign agents in 20 field offices to the case. Findings so far have strengthened the FBI'S hit-team suspicions. Two .22 pistols discarded after killings were traced to a Miami sporting-goods store that went out of business a few months ago. FBI lab tests show that the .22-cal slugs that killed Capone and Chin came from the same weapon—which has not been found. But both men were also linked through their mutual connection with DiGilio. The New Jersey gangster is currently appealing a prison sentence for conspiracy to rifle the files of the FBI's Newark field office—files that some officials think may have tipped off the Mob that Bompensiero and Maniaci were informants. The identity of the hit men is a mystery to most of the Mafia too. Some Mob insiders believe they are a squad of "greenies"—gunmen lately brought illegally into this country

from Sicily. Others say the .22 hits are the work of young Viet Nam War vets. Still other sources pin the killings on two seasoned triggermen of New York Drug King Carmine Galante. Whoever they are, they have brought the silenced .22 loud notoriety.

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